
THE CARGO COURIER

123rd Airlift Wing, Kentucky Air National Guard, Louisville, Ky.

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2nd Lt. Dale Greer/KyANG



Senior Airman Tommy Downs/KyANG

Nuevos

HORIZONTES

Kentucky Guard building new future, brick by brick

By 2nd Lt. Dale Greer
Wing Public Affairs Officer

LAS PEÑAS, Ecuador — The simple pleasures and quiet dignity of this small fishing village are as constant as the Pacific tides that roll gently to its shore.

A tsunami of technological progress may have swept over the Northern half of this hemisphere, but little has changed in Ecuador in the past 100 years.

The residents still draw their sustenance and livelihood from the sea, rowing into the surf aboard wooden canoes to cast their nets for the fish and shrimp that will put food on their tables and a little money in their pockets.

No one goes hungry, and everyone has a roof over his head, even if it's attached to a ramshackle shanty without electricity or plumbing. The town's children greet visitors with carefree smiles and wide-eyed innocence, while their hard-working parents express a reserved but unmistakable optimism.

Still, crushing poverty is a fact of life. Disease and poor sanitation mean most Ecuadorian men never live past the age of 45, and the cash-strapped government is ill-equipped to help its more needy citizens.

Necessities that Americans take for granted, like good schools and clinics, are considered luxuries in this remote village, and sanitary sewers are unheard of. The rutted mudpatch that serves as the

See Ecuador, Page 4

ABOVE LEFT: Senior Airman Bill Christopher of the 123rd Civil Engineering Squadron, lays concrete block for the construction of a school in Las Peñas.

LEFT: Air Guard civil engineers prepare a foundation for the building, which is replacing the shack in the background.

Families are crucial to our continued success as a wing

W

e are quickly coming to the end of another busy and successful fiscal year.

It is appropriate, then, that we take the time this UTA to congratulate our-

selves and thank our families for allowing us to do the serious and important work of serving our country.

We do that job very well, and we all know that we couldn't do it without the support of our families.

So to all of the wives, husbands, moms, dads and kids out there who let your husbands, wives, kids, moms and dads come out and play with us — thanks loads!

To make sure we help the families who help us, the Department of Defense is placing a large emphasis on Family Support.

As organizations tend to do, there will be many new programs heralding the importance of the family, all designed to add structure to things that we have done for years.

These programs are necessary, and they will help us better support our members and their families — as long as we keep the programs in perspective.

By that I mean we must always focus on supporting the family and not merely on supporting the programs.

During my tenure in this great organization, I have witnessed many examples of family support in action.

The first instance that comes to mind is one in which I was the beneficiary. I had been in the unit for a year or so when my dad passed away. I was still a relatively new guy and did not know all that many people. Despite being new, I was amazed at how



Col. Michael L. Harden
123rd Airlift Wing Commander

many folks visited at the funeral home and how many offers of help I received.

I will never forget Gary Burge taking me out to his car after visitation had ended and giving me the coldest, best-tasting beer I have ever had.

I will also never forget the turnout at the funeral the next day when I looked up and saw Gen. Carl Black. Here I was, a new Captain WSO, and the wing commander took time to attend my dad's funeral.

I knew then that this organization was one great outfit.

Other examples include the help given our folks when the tornadoes came through Bullit County several years ago.

You provided food, clothing and shelter

to our folks who needed it. You did it not because a commander asked you to, but because you saw the need, and you filled that need.

When Tom Thornton's son died several years ago, most of us were standing around the funeral home trying to think of the right thing to say — only to find out later that John Amshoff was over at Tom's house cutting his grass so that it would look nice when folks came by to pay their respects after the funeral.

He saw a need, and he filled it.

Current examples include the support given to Mary Jo Weisenberger during the illness of her daughter, and Charlie Simpson during the recovery of his son, an Air Force pilot who was injured last month when his F-16 crashed upon takeoff in Japan.

We do this naturally, and it is as much a part of the fabric of this organization as flying, fixing and supporting.

The quality of people in an organization give it its character and definition. Our aircraft may be our most expensive asset, but our people are our most valuable asset.

Every member of the Thoroughbred Express — and their families — deserve our support.

You have given it unselfishly in the past, and I know that you will continue giving well into the future.

— Thanks loads,

Michael L. Harden

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If you have a story idea, photo or article to submit, stop by the PA office, room 2117 of the Wing Headquarters Building. Deadline for the next issue is Sept. 2.



Tech. Sgt. Charlie Simpson/KyANG

Direct Deposit

Chief Master Sgt. David Orange and Tech. Sgt. Todd Albin make a "large" donation to the WHAS Crusade for Children in June. The money, which will benefit handicapped youngsters, was raised by the KyANG Chief's Council through ticket sales for the 1998 Bean Soup Feast.

Family Day offers fun for all ages

By Senior Airman Amy Carr
Cargo Courier Staff Writer

Plenty of family, friends and fun are in store tomorrow during Air Guard Family Day.

From Karaoke and volleyball to a ring toss and duck pond, the day's activities will offer events for all ages, said Master Sgt. Rose Farquhar, who is the wing's family support coordinator.

"All Guard members' families are encouraged to come and spend the day," she said. "This is an important event for us because it gives us a chance to show appreciation to our families."

Unit-sponsored activities have traditionally been some of the most popular events at Family Day, Farquhar said, because they give family members the opportunity to see what the Air Guard does.

This year's events will include C-130 tours, Security Forces demonstrations and a Special Tactics display.

Special guest Mrs. Cathylee Weaver, wife of Air National Guard Director Maj. Gen. Paul Weaver Jr., also will meet with Guard members' spouses.

For lunch, each unit will hold its own picnic at noon.

To ensure that there is adequate parking on base for visiting families, Farquhar asks that unit members park at Male High School tomorrow.

SCHEDULED EVENTS

9 a.m.....Chapel services
Noon.....Unit picnics
1 p.m.....Mrs. Weaver speaks
with family members
1-4 p.m.....Displays and activities

205th declared combat-ready

By Maj. Ralinda Gregor
KyANG Chief of Public Affairs

Less than two years after converting to its current mission, the 205th Combat Communications Squadron successfully completed its first operational readiness inspection last month, earning combat-ready status from the 9th Air Force inspector general team.

The squadron earned solid ratings for exceptional performance during its initial response phase, when it deployed to Dugway Proving Ground, Utah; and for dedicated customer support during the ORI's employment phase, when it provided communications links for real-world customers who were participating in exercise Global Patriot.

Thousands of reservists and active duty troops took part in the multi-national, joint-service exercise, which was designed to test their ability to defend South Korea from a simulated invasion.

The 205th's combination of inspections and live-fly operations grew out of recommendations presented in the Quadrennial Defense Review, said Maj. Neil Mullaney, the squadron's detachment commander.

The unit was a test bed for the concept, which should make inspections less costly.

They certainly make them more realistic, Mullaney said.

"Our customers arrived at Dugway and were expecting communications service as we were going through the ORI," Mullaney

explained.

"When you're dealing with communications, real customers can never have enough, and they can never have it fast enough."

The challenging nature of the ORI provided many of unit's members with vital experience, said Chief Master Sgt. Joe Goodin, the squadron's maintenance superintendent.

It also gave them an opportunity to pick up some helpful tips.

"We knew we had some weaknesses in some areas, and the IG team gave us suggestions on how to improve them," Goodin said.

Three Kentuckians also were recognized by the IG team as superior performers — 2nd Lt. Joseph Clemente, Master Sgt. John Emly and Tech. Sgt. Tim Cruse.

"I'm very proud of each and every member of the 205th," said Col. Michael Harden, 123rd Airlift Wing commander.

"They deployed successfully, performed their wartime mission and fulfilled their force protection and post-attack responsibilities. That's a heck of a big job for a small contingent of 43 people."

Mullaney praised the base for its support during the inspection.

"We successfully completed the first phase in large part due to the support that we received from the 123rd, especially the wing plans office and the aerial port squadron," Mullaney said.

"Without those two entities, we'd probably still be sitting on the ramp."



Senior Airman Tommy Downs/KyANG

CLOCKWISE FROM ABOVE: Staff Sgt. Nick Jateff of the 96th Civil Engineering Squadron watches as a load of sand is dumped at the school site; Staff Sgt. Tony Long of the 123rd Civil Engineering Squadron removes tree roots from around the building's footer; Concrete is poured for the building's foundation; Senior Airman Joel Ortega of the 96th prepares steel reinforcements.



Senior Airman Tommy Downs/KyANG



Senior Airman Tommy Downs/KyANG



Senior Airman Tommy Downs/KyANG

Ecuador

Continued from Page 1

town's main road smells disturbingly more like an outhouse than its chief thoroughfare.

This summer, however, more than 1,300 members of the Kentucky Army

and Air National Guard are working together to improve the living conditions here and across coastal Ecuador.

The soldiers and airmen are participating in operation *Nuevos Horizontes* — Spanish for “new horizons” — that will construct five schools, three medical clinics and four latrines in towns throughout coastal Ecuador by

Sept. 5.

The Air Guard contingent, working with 25 active duty civil engineers from Eglin Air Force Base, Fla., was charged with building a school, clinic and latrine in Las Peñas during its phase of the operation, which began April 29.

More than 120 Kentucky Air

Guard civil engineers, security police, communications specialists and supply specialists have been deployed to the project, with most planning on two-week rotations.

The planning for the project, however, went back months.

COVER STORY

Neuvos

RIZONTES



Senior Airman Tommy Downs/KyANG

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"This is a humongous logistical exercise," said Maj. Phil Howard, who is operations officer for the 123rd Civil Engineering Squadron.

"We're talking about the largest mobilization for the state of Kentucky since the Gulf War."

See Construction, Page 6



Senior Airman Tommy Downs/KyANG

CLOCKWISE FROM LEFT: Senior Airman Damon Hobbs of the 123rd Civil Engineering Squadron pours mortar on concrete blocks at the school site; Senior Airman Bill Christopher aligns the blocks to form the structure's rear wall; Senior Airman Joel Ortega scrapes excess mortar from the building's concrete floor.

BELOW: The school at Las Peñas nears completion. The 1,500-square-foot facility will be complemented by a 700-square-foot medical clinic and a small latrine, all of which are designed to require little or no maintenance. Overall, troops participating in *Neuvos Horizontes* will construct 14 buildings.



2nd Lt. Dale Greer/KyANG



Senior Airman Tommy Downs/KyANG

Army Guardsman killed in Ecuador

By Staff Sgt. David W. Altom
Kentucky Army National Guard

RICHMOND, Ky. — Kentucky Army National Guard Maj. Robert S. Hacker was buried with full military honors here one week after being killed in a vehicle accident while on duty in the South American nation of Ecuador.

Hacker — of Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 201st Engineer Battalion — died on July 8th of injuries he received when the vehicle in which he was traveling ran off a road and overturned in Esmeraldas Province.

Hacker was accompanied by one other U.S. Army soldier and an Ecuadorian Army officer when the accident occurred.

A member of the Kentucky Army National Guard for 18 years and a veteran of numerous overseas deployments to Latin America and the Caribbean, Hacker was in Ecuador as part of the command element for *Nuevos Horizontes* ("New Horizons"), the Kentucky National Guard's humanitarian relief mission there.

Approximately 1,300 soldiers and airmen are participating in the construction of schools and clinics, while providing medical care, helicopter and logistical support, and site security. Hacker was the operations officer for the exercise task force, supervising the fielding of troops and overseeing the numerous projects.

The timing of Hacker's death was as ironic as it was tragic. A member of the mission's duration team, he had been in Ec-

uador since April and was scheduled to come home the weekend following his death. He died on the eve of his son's seventh birthday.

In addition to his overseas missions, Hacker was well-known for the role he played in responding to the needs of the community in which he lived during numerous

tation," said Kentucky Adjutant General John R. Groves. "Although his mission was to train soldiers for war, he will best be remembered for his intense interest in helping others less fortunate.

"Whether it was directing relief efforts during floods or snowstorms in Kentucky, building an orphanage on the Caribbean island of Dominica, or a medical clinic in Ecuador, Robert Hacker was committed to helping improve the lives of his fellow man. He was an outstanding professional Army officer and a devoted husband and father. He was our friend, and he will be missed."

Members of both the Kentucky Air and Army National Guard turned out to honor Hacker's memory during his funeral service last month at Richmond Cemetery.

Airmen from the 123rd Air-lift Wing served as his color guard, while combat engineers from his home unit fired the 21-gun salute. The sound of bagpipes playing "My Old Kentucky Home" filled the air as the flag-draped coffin was laid to rest.

A memorial fund has been established in the name of Maj. Hacker by his family. Proceeds

from the fund will be used to purchase textbooks for the schools he helped build while serving in Ecuador. Donations can be sent to The Major Robert Hacker Memorial Fund, c/o SFC Fitzpatrick; HQ 201st Engineer Battalion; 2519 Lexington Ave.; Ashland, KY 41101.



John Flavell/Ashland Daily Independent

Hacker, shown here in Ecuador one month before his death, was an 18-year veteran of the Kentucky Guard.

emergencies and natural disasters. He was awarded the Kentucky State Active Duty Ribbon on three separate occasions for coming to the aid of Kentuckians struck down in their time of need.

"As a Kentucky Army National Guard Engineer, Robert Hacker had a unique repu-

was to establish a base camp from scratch, which provided its own set of logistical difficulties.

The heavy rains of El Niño caused mud slides that washed out the only road between the Port of Esmeraldas and the Air Guard site, Howard said, so much of the initial equipment had to be delivered by Army CH-47 Chinook helicopters.

Because of a problem with local contractors, the initial team also had diffi-

culty getting materials like sand to prepare foundations for the campsite's tents, although the engineers eventually received permission from Esmeraldas' mayor to mine their own, Howard said.

Despite such problems, the Air Guard's base camp went from a muddy, overgrown patch to a functionally effective site within six days, allowing incoming troops to be-

Continued on next page

Construction

Continued from Page 5

Hundreds of tons of heavy equipment and more than 100 pieces of rolling stock were shipped to Ecuador by barge and marshalled at the Port of Esmeraldas, near Las Peñas, while other gear was airlifted by military transports.

The first challenge for incoming troops

Continued from previous page

gin the construction effort.

Again, however, the engineers encountered problems getting materials from local contractors, who were supplying gravel and concrete blocks.

"The contractors had it set up so we were supposed to go over and get the gravel from them, but the road was washed out and we had to go across two rivers to get it," Howard said.

"There was an Army bridge company that offered to help by taking us across the rivers, but they bugged out after the first week, so we were left trying to get across using commercial carriers.

"We had to barter, beg and plead — do whatever we could to get across those rivers."

Howard said convoys also began driving along the beach to bypass the blocked roadways, but that option had perils of its own since the movements had to be timed to coincide with low tide. More than one vehicle got stuck in the wet sand.

These kinds of hardships, however, are what make *Nuevos Horizontes* such a valuable training experience, said Lt. Col. Tom Marks, commander of the 123rd Civil Engineering Squadron.

"You could not afford, nor could you ever devise, this kind of training," Marks said. "Not only do they have to design and build the base camp, they also have to live in what they design. They have to deal with the elements, and they have to improvise to get the project done because there's no hardware store to go to and purchase needed items.

"These kinds of things that our people have to overcome are the same kinds of things you face in war. It just doesn't get any more real-world than this."

Brig. Gen. John R. Groves, Kentucky's adjutant general, agreed, noting that an operation like *Nuevos Horizontes* is "everything but going to war."

"We have to bring our equipment, our soldiers, our infrastructure — we bring everything that's necessary to conduct a military operation," he said.

The exercise also requires a high degree of cooperation between the Army and Air Guard, as well as active duty Army and Air Force units — something that is increasingly crucial to military operations anywhere in the world.

Brig. Gen. Verna Fairchild, Kentucky's assistant adjutant general for air, summed it up by saying "jointness is the name of the game."

"If we go off to war," Fairchild said, "it's not going to be all Air Guard in one place and all Army Guard someplace else. It's good for the state, as well as the nation, that we work together, and I'm extremely pleased with the level of integration that I've seen."

The operation also has its emotionally rewarding and personally satisfying aspects, said Master Sgt. Pat Fields of the 123rd Civil Engineering Squadron.

"The kinds of things we're doing here are real gratifying," Fields said. "The school they have now is not much more than a shack, so this new one's really going to help them out immensely."

Edgar Quiñones agrees.

The 43-year-old father of three, who lives across the street from the new school, said he is excited about the facilities and the hope they bring to his village



Photos by 2nd Lt. Dale Greer/KyANG



ABOVE: One of the nicer homes in Las Peñas is nonetheless a good example of their crude construction.

LEFT: Resident Edgar Quiñones talks to an interpreter about his hopes for the future.

"Now that we have a good school and a good clinic," he said through an interpreter, "we can work to improve our village some more. Then maybe more people will want to come here and bring more prosperity to our town."

Senior Airman Christopher Jackson, meanwhile, finds his satisfaction in less tangible but equally important contributions.

"We're leaving a lasting impact as far as relations go," said Jackson, a heating and air conditioning specialist with the 123rd Civil Engineering Squadron. "Maybe these people will come to respect us a little bit more as we come to respect them a lot more.

"You can already see that in their faces — the way they smile and wave at you — and the kids are very curious about what we're doing here. They're getting a lot out of this, and that's good because the children are the future. This school is here for them.

"We're making progress, and progress is what it's all about."

Next month: The 123rd Medical Squadron in Ecuador

Baca retiring after 42 years in the military

NGB director praised for legacy of excellence

By Master Sgt. Bob Haskell
National Guard Bureau

ARLINGTON, Va. — Lt. Gen. Edward Baca's leadership has been crucial in developing a restructured Air Force that makes better use of the Air National Guard, Acting Air Force Secretary F. Whitten Peters told more than 600 people gathered here for the general's retirement ceremony July 30.

"We could not have instituted these important reforms without the incredibly professional, well-trained, well-equipped and gung ho forces we get from the Guard," Peters said during his tribute to Baca, who is retiring after four years as the Guard Bureau's chief and nearly 42 years in uniform.

Peters added that this level of professionalism exists only because of "the leadership provided by you and your Guard commanders over the last few years."

The celebration for Baca and his wife, Rita, featured a sentimental dinner address by their oldest son, Brian, an Army Guard major; and a video about the family's life in New Mexico and Washington that was pre-

pared by their daughter Karen, an Air Guard technical sergeant.

"Having the courage to dream is what life is all about," Maj. Baca said about his father's career, which progressed from Army Guard private to three-star general and included a voluntary tour in Vietnam.

The Bacas' five other children also were present, as were the general's four brothers and sister and retired Brig. Gen. Antonio Martinez, who enlisted Baca in the New Mexico Army Guard Nov. 19, 1956.

Baca was presented the Defense Distinguished Service Medal, which is the nation's third-highest military honor; and the following morning, he was given Army and Air Force Distinguished Service Medals in a ceremony at Fort Myer, Va.

Mrs. Baca accepted the Commander's Award for Public Service for befriending orphans around the world and an Army Certificate of Appreciation for her 40 years as a military wife.

Peters explained that the Air Force's planned restructuring will mean fundamental changes to the Air Guard. Under

the plan, active, Guard and Reserve units will be linked into 10 force packages with a cross-section of Air Force weapons systems.

Each package will be on call to handle contingency operations for 90 days every 15 months, "which should lead to a substantial reduction in the operational tempo," he added.

"Most importantly for the Guard and Reserve," Peters promised, "we will schedule deployment periods and exercises a year to two years in advance — so you can tell your employers long in advance."

That was music indeed to Baca, who championed the total-force cause during his dozen years as New Mexico's adjutant general and during his four years as the Guard Bureau's chief.

"The key to our success is the evolving nature of our organization, and today that means an increasingly integrated force able to stand on the line as a full partner with our active component teammates," he said at Fort Myer.

"In the final analysis, we are all advocates for freedom — active, Guard and Reserve."

Lt. Gen. Russell C. Davis, who has served as vice chief of the National Guard Bureau since 1995, was confirmed by the Senate July 30 as Baca's successor.

Promotions in the Kentucky Air National Guard

The following servicemembers have been promoted in the Kentucky Air National Guard and as reservists of the U.S. Air Force.

TO AIRMAN (E-2)

•David Roby,
123rd Mission Support Flt.

TO AIRMAN 1ST CLASS (E-3)

•Kelly Drescher,
123rd Medical Sq.
•Stephanie Hazle,
123rd Services Flt.
•Daniel Marks,
165th Weather Flt.
•Dana Walker,
123rd Communications Flt.

TO SENIOR AMN. (E-4)

•Matthew Atkinson,
123rd Operations Support Flt.
•Laura Mabe,
123rd Aerial Port Sq.
•Patrick Shields,
123rd Aerial Port Sq.
•Scott Terrill,
123rd Security Forces Sq.
•Norma White,
123rd Mission Support Flt.

TO STAFF SGT. (E-7)

•Nicholas Clements,
123rd Operations Support Flight
•Thomas Hagan,
123rd Communications Flt.
•David Hammer Jr.,
123rd Civil Engineer Sq.

•Christopher Middleton,
123rd Security Forces Sq.
•Damian Probus,
123rd Aerial Port Sq.
•Robert Robinson,
165th Airlift Sq.
•John Roth Jr.,
123rd Operations Support Flt.

TO TECH. SGT. (E-5)

•William Devore,
123rd Communications Flt.
•Chris Tellis,
123rd Mission Support Flt.

TO LT. COL. (O-5)

•Thomas Curry,
123rd Airlift Wing